

## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

1. The "Why" of Parliamentary Law:  
Parliamentary law is simple in principle as it is based largely on common sense and courtesy. It seems technical because it has been necessary to develop a special vocabulary for discussing it. But if one knows the vocabulary, the rules come easy.

The purpose of a meeting is to promote and carry on the business of the organization effectively and efficiently. This may be done in many ways without violating the rules of good parliamentary procedure and, by following the rules of good parliamentary procedure, can enhance the quality of one's business meeting.

2. The "Purpose" of Parliamentary Law:
  - To enable an assembly to transact business with speed and efficiency.
  - To protect the rights of each individual.
  - To preserve a spirit of harmony within the group.
3. Five Basic Principles to Consider:
  - Only one subject may claim the attention of the assembly at one time.
  - Each proposition presented for consideration is entitled to full and free debate.
  - Every member has rights equal to every other member.
  - The will of the majority must be carried out, and the rights of the minority must be preserved.
  - The personality and desires of each member should be merged into the larger unit of the organization.
4. A "motion" is a proposal that the group take certain action.
5. How Motions are Classified:
  - Main Motion - brings a question before the assembly.
  - Subsidiary Motion - For the purpose of modifying or disposing of the main motion under discussion. Examples: To amend, to table, to refer to committee.
  - Privileged Motion - Has no connection with the main motion, but are of such importance as to demand immediate consideration. Examples: To adjourn, recess, call to orders of the day.
  - Incidental Motion - Miscellaneous motions which cannot be placed in any of the groups listed above. Examples: division of the house, reconsider, appeal the decision of the chair.

6. Steps necessary to Present and Dispose of a Motion:
  - a. Address the chair - rise if desired by the chair.
  - b. Be recognized by the chair.
  - c. State your motion - "I move" is the key.
  - d. Motion needs a second by another member.
  - e. Chair restates motion.
  - f. Debate is held. Maker of motion has chance to speak first, alternating the pros and cons to the issue. Note: members should not talk against their own motions, even though they have changed their minds. They may, however, vote against their own motions or withdraw them.
  - g. Vote is taken.
  - h. Chair announces result of vote and action to be taken.

7. Amendments to a Motion:  
The purpose of an amendment is to change or modify the motion. Anyone who wishes to change or modify the original motion may propose an amendment. The need for an amendment may be apparent at once or as a result of discussing the motion. An amendment must be related to the subject of the main motion. There are three methods of amending:

- By striking out a certain word or words.
- By adding a certain word, or words, or a sentence.
- By substitution of a word, phrase, clause or an entirely new motion.

An amendment, once it has been moved, must be seconded, is debatable, and requires a majority vote to pass. If the amendment passes, the original motion is still before the group. Discussion continues on the main motion as amended, and a vote on the amended motion is needed.

### **Methods of voting on a motion**

1. By Voice  
The presiding officer states: "All in favor, say 'Aye'"; "All those opposed, 'Nay.'"
2. By Roll Call  
Secretary calls each person's name, and she responds with 'yes' or 'no.'
3. By Ballot  
Members write their vote on a slip of paper. At least two members are selected to count the ballots. Results are announced by the presiding officer.
4. By Division  
Members raise their hands or stand when presiding officers ask for those in favor or opposed to the motion to indicate their vote.